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Message Text

SECRET

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47
ACTION NODS-00

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P 291232Z DEC 75
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3050

S E C R E T NEW DELHI 17273

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IN, US
SUBJECT: US-INDIA RELATIONS: CHANGE IN INDIAN AMBASSADORS IN WASHINGTON

1. AT A SMALL "AMERICAN" DINNER GIVEN ON DEC. 26 BY FOREIGN SECRETARY KEWAL SINGH, TIKKI KAUL ONCE AGAIN BECAME VERY ARGUMENTATIVE AND ALMOST BELLIGERENT. IMMEDIATELY AFTER WE LEFT THE TABLE, MRS. GANDHI'S PRIVATE SECRETARY, P.N. DHAR, TOOK ME ASIDE, PRIVATELY APOLOGIZED FOR KAUL'S BEHAVIOR, AND SAID, "PAY NO ATTENTION TO HIS CRAP." (I HAD A PRIVATE DINNER WITH L.K. JHA ON DEC. 27 AT WHICH HE (JHA) INDICATED KAUL WAS TO BE REPLACED IN WASHINGTON BY KEWAL SINGH.)

2. DHAR FURTHER ASKED THAT THE TWO OF US STAY IN CLOSE CONTACT AND FREELY DISCUSS ANY AND ALL PROBLEMS. HE SAID HE WOULD EXPECT ME TO BE COMPLETELY CANDID WITH HIM ABOUT ANY COMPLAINTS I MIGHT HAVE AND HE WOULD BE THE SAME. DHAR FURTHER SAID THAT BOTH HE AND FOREIGN MINISTER CHAVAN WERE GREATLY PLEASED WITH THEIR MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY IN PARIS AND THEY FELT "ALL PROBLEMS WERE SOLVED." IT OBVIOUSLY MEANT A GREAT DEAL TO THEM THAT THE SECRETARY WAS ABLE TO FIND TIME FOR THEM DURING HIS BRIEF STAY IN PARIS.

3. KEWAL SINGH AND OTHERS AT THE DECEMBER 26 DINNER QUITE URGENTLY ASKED ME TO DO WHAT I COULD TO GET US TO KEEP OUR DIRECT BROADCAST TELEVISION SATELLITE IN PLACE FOR AN ADDITIONAL YEAR SO THAT THE SITE TELEVISION EXPERIMENT IN
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INDIA COULD BE CONTINUED. I GAVE THEM NO ENCOURAGEMENT.

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4. ALTHOUGH SOME OF THE OLD THEMES ABOUT FOREIGN INTERFERENCE ARE BEING REPEATED (IN MUTED FORM) IN DOCUMENTS BEING PUBLISHED PREPARATORY TO THE CONGRESS PARTY'S ANNUAL SESSION, CHAVAN'S STATEMENT READS THAT THE US AND INDIA HAVE MUCH IN COMMON AND RELATIONS WERE BEING IMPROVED.

5. I TAKE ALL OF THIS AS MEANING THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA IS SEEKING BETTER RELATIONS. I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT THEY ARE AFTER NOR DO I KNOW WHETHER THEY ARE PREPARED TO CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH IMPROVED RELATIONS CAN FLOURISH. BUT IT SEEMS SIGNIFICANT TO ME THAT THEY ARE SEEKING ME OUT WITH THE OBJECT OF IMPROVEMENT IN MIND.
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